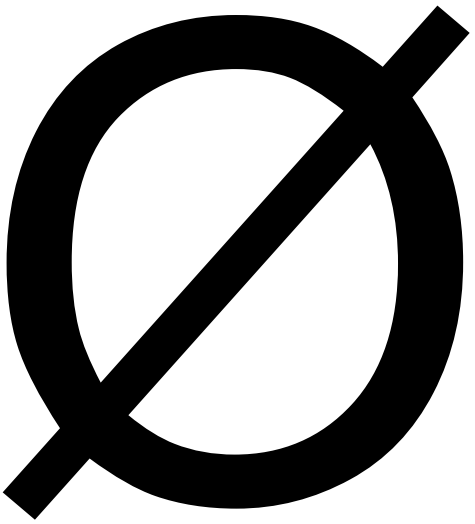
Isølated (Sep to Oct 2025)
Editor : Yaver Javid

Preface

I am writing this preface again because at the last date of submission I have nothing to compile. I had thought of this name : “isølated” for a publication a year ago alongside another : “incorporated”. The **ø** in isølated was meant to represent its isolatedness. But today I think it will serve as a placeholder for what I had hoped I would receive and a metaphor for what I actually received.



I am taking this opportunity to share some of my work.

Kath Chi Zevi Hinz Sawal Chu Tholuk

(Written by Hari Krishn Kaul & Translated by Yaver Javid(Me))

The door was closed from the inside. I peeked through the keyhole and saw my friend tied up, a handkerchief stuffed in his mouth. His cloak was torn in many places. Two men were searching everywhere. One was short, the other tall, both wearing the same olive and black uniform.

They couldn't find what they wanted. Then they untied my friend and tightened the laces of their shoes. I thought they'd come out, so I stood against the wall. When they stepped out, they looked left and right. When they saw me, they got angry. I did something clever—I offered each of them a cigarette. They lit them and went back inside, sitting by the window.

I went to my friend and asked what had happened, but the handkerchief was still in his mouth. I glanced at the men; one of them got up, removed the handkerchief, and put it in his pocket. I kissed my friend's hand and asked again what had happened. He didn't reply. I got suspicious and opened his mouth—there was no tongue.

I reached into the man's pocket, giggling, and asked him, "What's the benefit of taking his tongue? Give it back."
He threw his cigarette down and said, "What should I give back?"
"His tongue," I said, handing him another cigarette.
"I didn't take it," he said, and gave me the handkerchief. I shook it, but nothing fell out. I checked all his pockets.
He said, "Maybe he hid it himself."
"Where would he have kept it?" I said. "Wouldn't it have rotted? He doesn't even have a fridge. Many people keep their tongues in fridges so they can take them out when they need them. If you took it, give it back."

I searched his pockets again until the tall one said, "What do we need a tongue for? We were looking for eggs."
"For what?" I asked.
They said they needed 6,000,000 eggs and had only collected 300,000 so far.
"For what?" I asked again.
They laughed loudly.
"I don't know—for what?" I pressed.
The short one said, "The new bungalow needs eggs for the shine on its floor."
"Whose bungalow?" I asked.
They started laughing again.

I turned to my friend and asked, “Do you know who is building this new house?” I felt stupid and tried to leave. They grabbed my arm and asked, “Where are you going?”
“Why not? Why should I tolerate this oppression?”
“Which oppression?” they exclaimed.

They said, “If he had eggs in his house, we would have taken them. Then what would he have eaten? What would he have fed his children? He neither has eggs nor children. If he had children, he should have had eggs. And if we had taken them, his children would’ve been weak and died early. Isn’t that oppression?”
I said, “What can I do?”
They said, “You should raise your voice.”

The tall one looked even taller. I said, “Why don’t you raise your voice then?”
He said, “Our duty is to collect six million eggs. We’re also guilty when we search the farms, houses, and pockets of people.”

I took the handkerchief and wiped his tears. He said, “Clean my nose too.” I did it.
Then I asked, “What should I do?”
He turned to the other and said, “Let’s go to the dervish.”

We went to a house where an old dervish sat with a long white beard. In front of him were two mounds—one of almonds and one of cardamoms. His disciple was massaging his legs. I said, “Someone is oppressing…”
The short one grabbed a handful of almonds and said, “Indeed, oppression is happening. Hens are now sitting on rocks to incubate them.”

The dervish’s eyes filled with tears, but the disciple, unmoved, said, “If hens truly love, then rocks should hatch.”
The dervish giggled. I added, “Rocks can never hatch. Eggs can hatch in machines without hens.”
The dervish looked at me and giggled again.

The disciple argued with me, and we went back and forth. The short one took my side, the tall one took his. Words turned to shoving. I turned to the dervish, who giggled.
The disciple said, “He has decided not to talk for a year as a fast.”
The dervish looked at me and handed me a few cardamoms.
I said, “What should I do with these?”
The disciple said, “Put them in your mouth and chew. You’ll forget the eggs in two days.”

We left. I asked, “Now?”
The short one said, “We’ll go to the wise man.”

The short one left us—he had to seize ten hidden eggs. He was to be hanged.

We went to an old building and climbed the stairs. After four steps, I was short of breath, so the tall one carried me up to the seventh floor. The wise man was sitting in a chair, writing something. A cup of coffee sat before him.

I asked, “What are eggs for?”
“For eating, of course,” he said. “Would you like an omelet or an egg sandwich with coffee?”
He reached into a cupboard and took out two coffee boxes.
“I’m not here to drink coffee,” I said. “I’m here for an answer. If eggs are for eating, what right does someone have to use them in cement?”

He gulped his coffee and said, “That’s not a fundamental question.”
“Then what is?”
He took off his glasses and wiped them. “The fundamental question,” he said, “is which came first—the hen or the egg.”
The tall one nodded in agreement.
I said, “No one has solved that yet.”
He started writing again. I interrupted. “What’s your opinion?”
He said, “Answering is not important. Thinking about it is. Whatever came first, the egg exists. Now tell me—what do you think exists?”
I had no answer.

The tall one shook me and said, “What do you think is existing?”
The wise man said, “You’ve always seen the egg from the outside, never entered it.”
The tall one asked, “Have you?”
The wise man said, “Then am I just yapping?”
“What did you see there?” I asked.

He got another cup of coffee and an omelet. While sipping and eating, he said, “There was nothing. Zero. The same zero that’s in you, in me, in space, in light, in the abyss.”

I felt sleepy. The tall one took me outside. The short one was waiting, eager to hear what the wise man had said.
“He, like the dervish, said nothing,” I told him.
The tall one laughed. “He answered everything,” he said.

They grabbed my arms—one on each side.
The short one said, “He should walk on the right.”
The tall one said, “No, on the left.”
I jerked free and ran through the market, the fields, and the paddies until I reached a big ground.

On one side were grand houses with flowers and cars in front. In the ground were people, their heads wrapped in cloaks, silent.
I said to them, “Only one has been hanged so far. The eggs are still being collected. How many more will be hanged after this? I know you gave up your eggs, but they suspect you still have some hidden. They’ll come again.”

They stood silent.
I got angry. “You don’t know how important eggs are for your health. You can’t even speak because you lack eggs! They have proteins and vitamins! If you don’t stand up, you’ll be widowed again. The cars on the other side are honking—if you don’t move, they’ll run you over!”

Behind me, I heard clapping. I turned and saw the tall and short men clapping. I ignored them.
“I don’t know who’s taking these eggs,” I said, “but whoever it is—we won’t spare them. Eggs are for eating, not for construction.”

The people started moving—in groups of ones, twos, and threes—each getting a paper from a man in white clothes before leaving the ground. Soon, the place was empty.

I turned and asked, “Who is that man in white?”
They said, “Him,” and shouted, “Why don’t you get things easily?”
I asked, “What was that paper?”
The short one replied, “He was giving them permission to enter the house. Come and see.”

They took me with them. At the entrance was a big hall. People were on the floor, licking it.
“What are they doing?” I asked.
“Getting vitamins and proteins,” they said. “The floor has eggs in it.”

People took turns licking the floor. I stood there until the man in white came and said to the tall one, “The polishing went well. We don’t need a grinding machine—we have so much manpower in this country.”
The short one said, “When saliva and eggs mix, it shines even more.”

I looked down and saw my reflection in the floor. It scared me. I wanted to ask if my face was truly this frightening or if the floor had distorted it—but who could I ask? Everyone was busy licking the floor.

It was silent. I thought maybe silence was better for me too.
But then I remembered—between my friend and me, I’m the only one who still has a tongue.
His was pulled out.
And I still have mine.
So I’ll ask people: is my face truly this scary, or is it just the floor that’s twisted.